



4 May 2005



Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) and the 2005 European Living Pattern Survey

1. Every Soldier in the Army in Europe receives a cost of living allowance (COLA) to compensate for the differential in prices between CONUS and OCONUS and the effect that the euro exchange rate has on our purchasing power. This allowance is set by the euro exchange rate and data that is collected in periodic surveys known as the Living Pattern Survey and the Retail Price Schedule Survey.
2. Last year the survey data did not accurately represent our changing environment. We need to execute a solid survey that effectively reflects your cost of living in Europe. Therefore, we will survey more locations throughout the theater this year to baseline the data collection. I need your help to ensure that all Soldiers with family members (the eligible population for the survey) participate in this survey. This is your chance to help the system properly reflect your true monetary costs.
3. The 2005 European Living Pattern Survey begins 16 May and ends 17 June. This survey is required at least once every 3 years from Soldiers with command-sponsored family members living in areas designated to conduct the survey. The survey is fully automated and can be completed online at <https://www.perdiem.osd.mil/oscola/lps/germany/> using any computer. (This Web site will be activated during the survey period.)
4. The Living Pattern Survey reports the shopping behavior of Soldiers and their family members, and serves as the basis for the Retail Price Schedule Survey, which will be conducted later this summer. The Retail Price Schedule Survey reports actual prices for a market basket of goods and services at OCONUS locations.
5. Commanders and other leaders throughout the Army in Europe need to aggressively support the Living Pattern Survey in their organizations. This important survey will affect the pay and allowances of every Soldier in the European theater. Our goal is to give all Soldiers with command-sponsored family members living in survey locations (see below) the opportunity to participate. Maximum participation will help ensure our Soldiers get the COLA they need and deserve.

ANY MISSION, ANYWHERE!

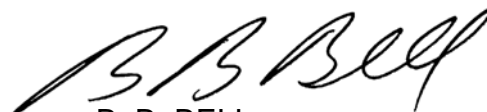
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6. Our USAREUR point of contact for this survey is the 266th Finance Command (DSN 379-7846 or e-mail: Stephen.Bridges@us.army.mil). The survey locations are as follows:

Belgium		
Hainaut Province (SHAPE)		Province of Limburg (Kleine Brogel)
Germany		
Ansbach		Kalkar
Bremen		Potsdam
Garmisch		Spangdahlem
Geilenkirchen		Stuttgart
Heidelberg		Vilseck/Grafenwöhr
Hohenfels		Wiesbaden
Kaiserslautern Military Community		
Italy		
Camp Darby	Ghedi	Vicenza
The Netherlands		
Province of Limburg (Brunssum/Schinnen)		Volkel



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General, US Army
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